

# **Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation Investment Strategies Committee**

## **Draft Meeting Summary**

### **FOR REVIEW AND ACTION**

**November 17, 1998**

**Present:** Dale Stedman, Chairman, Don Briscoe, Peter Hurley, Bettie Ingham, Arthur D. Jackson, Jr., Jennifer Joly, Representative Maryann Mitchell, Patricia Otley, Rick Bender (Steering Committee member)

**Not Present:** Bill Lampson, Vice Chair, Ted Bottiger, Senator Mary Margaret Haugen, John Kelly, Charles Mott

#### **Introductions**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m., welcoming all Committee members and introducing those who did not attend the previous meetings.

#### **Review Meeting Summaries**

The Chair reviewed minutes from previous meetings and asked for any proposed revisions.

The Committee discussed changes to the fourth bullet point of the Investment Strategies Committee charter. The Committee instructed its staff to develop new text to clarify the phrase “reduce demand for transportation facilities.” The Committee plans to review the proposed text at its next meeting in December.

The Committee approved the minutes from the previous meetings as presented, with the exception of the section discussed above.

#### **Discussion of Transportation Briefings**

The goal of the briefings is to bring all Commission members to a common level of understanding of transportation in Washington state, relevant terminology, and the transportation funding process. In general, members felt that the presentations were concise, simple, and contained good information. However, Committee members observed that the presenters were advocates of what they were presenting, and the presenters did not appear comfortable discussing perceived flaws in the current system.

Some of the issues or biases from the presentations that need further consideration include the following topics.

- **Need a better understanding of *exactly* what MPOs control.** No one addressed whether RTPOs and MPOs work together to maximize transportation investments. The Commission needs to be comfortable that an effective process is in place. The members do not know how much real power the RTPOs have in the process. How are they appointed? Perhaps a panel discussion with case studies, as well as asking more direct questions of the MPOs and RTPOs, would help address this question.
- **Is there a way to take common situation and work from conceptions at a local level to creation in the Legislature?** There appears to be a disconnect between the perceptions of how the systems works and the reality. The Legislature has much to say about money and how decisions about money are made, and the comment in the presentations was that the Legislature does not pay enough attention to priorities.
- **The ribbon chart misrepresents information.** The ranked priorities on the bottom left corner appear to be funded fully as money is available when, in fact, this is not true. Another complaint was that priorities on the chart change over time as well.
- **Briefings need to focus on the performance of the process as well as its structure .** What has been effective in the past? What modes and planning processes have worked well? This Committee would like more information on how to do things better and appropriate directions, and they feel that more diverse input is needed. Perhaps a comparison among various states of “best practices” would be appropriate. It is also important to consider who the presenters are. Representatives from agencies with a vested interest in the process may not be the best ones to consult. Perhaps members of the Legislature could speak to the problems that they see in the process, or engineers from WSDOT could relay their experience.
- **Avoid focus groups .** What is really needed is strong leadership. Focus groups always produce the same result: no new taxes. We need to figure out how to support strong leadership on this issue.
- **Several studies must have been done that have good information to start our analysis.** What happened in the reports and findings that have been completed in the last five years? What are the conclusions about transportation? This Committee would like to hear from states with growth management plans that have been in place longer than Washington state’s Growth Management Act. How can the Committee think holistically about transportation planning? If the plan is to continue to increase the distance between where we live and where we work, we are going to have to continue to spread the elongated systems. Evidently research has indicated a forecasted trend of people moving back into the cities for various reasons. Portland, Oregon, might provide an interesting case study.

### **Steering Committee Timeline**

The Chair reviewed the timeline for the Commission created by the Steering Committee with the members of the Investment Strategies Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.